THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) As on 1.1.2005, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) were operating 270 LPG distributorships in Bihar. The details of the owners, distributors and their category are available with the Director (Marketing) of the OMC concerned.

(d) OMCs received 40 established complaints against the operation of their LPG distributors in Bihar during the last two years and the current year. Action against erring distributors has been taken in terms of Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG)/Distributorship Agreement.

Production of oil from Bombay High Oil Wells

4266. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of the oil production capacity at Bombay High Oil Wells;

(b) the present production per year;

(c) the cost of production of oil on an average;

(d) whether it is a fact that it is rapidly becoming difficult to pump oil economically from Bombay High; and

(e) the steps proposed to ensure that costs of production of oil at Bombay remain economical?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Mumbai High field is at the stage of natural decline. However, the decline in production from Mumbai High has been reversed as a result of the implementation of Improved Oil Recovery (IOR)/ Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR) projects by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC). The production of oil from the Mumbai High field from 2000-01 to 2004-05 is as under:—

Year	Crude Oil Production (Million metric tons)
2000-01	10.188
2001-02	9.818
2002-03	11.378
2003-04	11,646
2004-05	12.593

(c) The cost of production of oil from Mumbai Offshore during 2003-04 was Rs. 4979/MT. As the annual accounts of ONGC for 2004-05 are yet to be finalized, the cost of production of oil for the said year has not been computed so far.

(d) and (e) All mature and aging fields enter a period of natural decline. However, ONGC has taken various steps to enhance the oil and gas production from the western offshore fields so that not only the decline is arrested but the cost of production also remains economical. These include:—

(i) Implementation of Improved Oil Recovery/Enhanced Oil Recovery Schemes.

(ii) Measures for Zero gas flaring in the western offshore installations.

(iii) Introduction of state-of-the-art technology.

(iv) Multilateral completion of oil wells.

Acquisition of oil fields in Latin American Countries

4267. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC Videsh Ltd. has confined its overseas investment scope only to Russia and East African countries;

(b) whether India would consider acquisition of oil fields in Venezuela and other Latin American countries such as Mexico, Ecuador, Colombia that offer opportunities for acquisition of oil and gas assets by India; and

(c) whether Mexico with confirmed reserves of more than 54 billion barrels of crude yet to be explored offshore in Gulf of Mexico is opening up its energy sector for foreign participation and if so, whether India has already evinced interest in the Mexican offer?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No, Sir. ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) has participating interest in oil and gas projects located not only in Russia and African countries such as Sudan, Libya and Egypt but also in Vietnam, Iraq, Iran, Myanmar, Syria, Australia, Ivory Coast and Qater too.

(b) OVL, in association with its sister oil sector national oil companies, is aggressively scouting for Exploration & Production (E&P) opportunities in countries such as Venezuela, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Yeman, Chad, Niger,